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Country programme recommendation**

Tunisia

Addendum

Summary

The present addendum to the country note submitted to the Executive Board at its first regular session of 2001 contains the final country programme recommendation for Board approval.

It contains a recommendation for funding the Tunisia country programme which has an annual planning level of $1 million or less. The Executive Director *recommends* that the Executive Board approve the amount of $3,329,000 from regular resources, subject to the availability of funds, and $2,500,000 in other resources, subject to the availability of specific-purpose contributions, for the period 2001 to 2006.

* E/ICEF/2001/12.

** The original country note provided only indicative figures for estimated programme cooperation. The figures provided in the present addendum are final and take into account unspent balances of programme cooperation at the end of 2000. They will be contained in the summary of 2001 programme recommendations to be funded from regular resources and other resources (E/ICEF/2001/P/L.73).

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Basic data[a] *(1999 unless otherwise stated)*	
Child population (millions, under 18 years)	3.5
U5MR (per 1,000 live births) (2000)	28
IMR (per 1,000 live births) (2000)	22
Underweight (% moderate and severe) (2000)	4
Maternal mortality rate (per 100,000 live births) (1994)	70
Literacy (% male/female) (2000)	81/60
Primary school enrolment (% net, male/female) (2000)	95/93
Primary school children reaching grade 5 (%) (1998)	92
Access to safe water (%)	89
Routine EPI vaccines financed by Government (%)	100
GNP per capita (US$)	2 090
One-year-olds fully immunized against:	
Tuberculosis	97 per cent
Diphtheria/pertussis/tetanus	96 per cent
Measles	71 per cent
Poliomyelitis	96 per cent
Pregnant women immunized against tetanus	77 per cent

[a] Excerpted from the publication *Progress since the World Summit for Children: A Statistical Review*, prepared as a supplement to the Secretary-General's report "We the children: end-decade review of the follow-up to the World Summit for Children" (A/S-27/3), and therefore may differ from data contained in the text of this document.

The situation of children and women

1. The analysis of the situation of children and women remains essentially the same as that described in the country note submitted to the Executive Board at its first regular session of 2001 (E/ICEF/2001/P/L.48), which was based largely on the results of the multiple indicator cluster survey (MICS-2) carried out in 2000. Some of the information contained in the country note is recalled below.

2. Tunisia has achieved most of the goals of the World Summit for Children. The infant mortality rate and the under-five mortality rate estimated respectively at 24 and 30 per 1,000 live births. Although there is no significant difference between boys and girls, mortality rates in rural areas continue to be twice as high as in urban areas. Neonatal mortality accounts for two thirds of infant mortality, which means that the quality of prenatal and birth monitoring needs to be improved. According to the results of MICS-2, 93 per cent of children have received complete vaccinations by their first birthday and the low birth weight rate is 5.4 per cent. The number of maternal deaths and the frequency of anaemia in women (26 per cent) although reduced, have not yet met the established goals.

3. According to Ministry of Education statistics, 99 per cent of children 6 years of age and 92 per cent of those in the 6 to 12-year age group attend school, with an insignificant gap between boys and girls. Only 14 per cent of children between 3 and

5 years of age receive pre-school education, whose quality is very uneven. The school drop-out rate has decreased significantly at the primary school level, but it remains approximately 10 per cent for children between 12 and 16 years of age. About 14 per cent of the children repeat a year at the primary school level and 19 per cent at the secondary level of basic education. Nearly 300,000 children between 6 and 16 years of age are not in school. The foremost problems in the area of education relate essentially to quality and performance, and there are major disparities between regions and between rural and urban areas. Access for children with disabilities is still limited. According to the 1999 population and employment survey conducted by the National Institute of Statistics, the illiteracy rate, although decreasing, is nevertheless estimated at 27 per cent and includes more than 53 per cent of rural women.

4. The following additional information, which has become available since the submission of the country note, should be taken into account: (a) the promulgation of the official decree establishing district health programmes, the operational implementation of which will require continued UNICEF support at the national, regional and local levels; (b) the presidential decision to gradually expand the preparatory pre-school year for children 5 years of age; in this connection, the Government has requested UNICEF technical support in defining the strategies to be established; (c) announcement of the establishment of a research institute on the rights of the child, which constitutes an important means of strengthening the intersectoral approach in the collection of data and the analysis and monitoring of the situation of children; (d) the establishment of an inter-ministerial committee with UNICEF participation to develop ways of integrating children with disabilities into the regular public school system.

Programme cooperation, 1997-2001

5. The mid-term review and strategy meeting highlighted the principal achievements of the programme: the contribution to the policy of decentralizing the health system (district health programmes); the gradual application of the "basic skills" approach to all primary schools throughout the country with a view to improving subsequent learning, which was preceded and prepared by the development of a pilot phase supported by UNICEF; and the establishment of the corps of child protection representatives, who are now cooperating in the 24 governorates.

6. By targeting the least efficient regions, the health programme has helped to raise the vaccination rate to over 90 per cent in all governorates. The frequency and seriousness of diarrhoeal diseases and acute respiratory infections has greatly diminished, and there has been a marked improvement in the quality and use of perinatal services. For example, between 1996 and 1999, prenatal monitoring increased by 10 points in Sidi Bouzid and 8 points in Gafsa. Adequate monitoring (four visits according to the recommended calendar) more than doubled in the same regions. The programme also contributed to the establishment of a system for auditing maternal deaths occurring within the health system with a view to accelerating the reduction in maternal and neonatal mortality. In six years, maternal deaths in hospitals have dropped by 29 per cent.

7. With regard to education, UNICEF has provided technical assistance for the "basic skills" experiment, the production of the necessary teaching tools and the training of staff. A total of 108 trainers, 7,500 teachers, more than 1,000 school principals, 700 teaching assistants and 400 inspectors have been trained. This support has continued to assist the gradual country-wide application of the basic skills approach. A database has been set up to follow the results achieved by students at a 50-school sample. On the basis of experience acquired in the rural schools of the Kef and Kasserine governorates, and with a view to reducing disparities between regions and between urban and rural areas throughout the country as regards quality of education and school performance, UNICEF provided support to the Ministry of Education for the development of the national strategy for the establishment of the priority education programme. A methodology for identifying schools which perform poorly has been established on the basis of 24 indicators, including the drop-out and repeat rates. Eight hundred basic education schools have been identified and studied with a view to determining the reasons for their poor performance. They will be the focus of a programme to improve the quality of learning and reduce school failure and drop-out rates, with the support of the World Bank and the European Union.

8. The audio-visual project is designed to disseminate to parents knowledge and skills relating to the development and stimulation of the young child: videos, guides and spot announcements have been produced. Almost 8,500 parents have attended motivation sessions, and spot announcements have been broadcast by national and regional television and radio channels. Furthermore, agreements to ensure wider dissemination to families have been signed with the national literacy programme, the National Office for the Family and Population, non-governmental organizations and the Ministry of Public Health, which has agreed to integrate this programme into its strategy for the integrated management of childhood illness (PIMCI).

9. A survey of a sample of 1,500 schoolchildren between 9 and 14 years of age has revealed their expectations and their perception of the ability of family, school and society to guarantee their rights. The results of the survey were presented to the National Council for Children and returned to the students at the basic school, with a view to promoting their participation. A media information campaign has likewise been developed.

10. UNICEF provided technical support for the preparation of the annual report on the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the conducting of MICS-2. It contributed to an initial consideration of issues relating to adolescents and young people and to the strengthening of the network of associations working with children deprived of a family setting with a view to facilitating coordination with public institutions and developing alternative strategies for their care.

Lessons learned from past cooperation

11. At the central level, the work of advocacy and technical assistance has played an important role in the development of national policies. At the same time, the design of innovative approaches in underprivileged regions and regular monitoring of actions have helped to improve and strengthen the task of providing support at the central level, based on practical experience. These two converging approaches have strengthened UNICEF's credibility with its national partners, and they recognize

that it plays the role of both catalyst and facilitator of exchanges of experience. The joint preparation of external evaluations with the Government has played a crucial role in reshaping the strategies of the programme of cooperation and supporting national policies. The relationship of trust which UNICEF has been able to create with its current partners should serve as a basis for developing working relationships with new partners at the regional and local levels, with other ministries and with associations.

12. Participation and dialogue with users of the health services, families and parents of students constitute an essential element in the process of improving the quality of services. The implementation of the priority education programme and the district health programmes provides opportunities for developing and strengthening this approach during the next cooperation cycle.

13. Similarly, in order to strengthen the strategies for the prevention of social exclusion, the training of child protection representatives should be supplemented by the establishment of a prevention and protection system based on local operational networks involving the public sectors and associations.

Recommended programme cooperation, 2002-2006

Estimated annual expenditure

(In thousands of United States dollars)

	2002	*2003*	*2004*	*2005*	*2006*	*Total*
General resources						
Education	188.35	185.95	179.55	176.15	165.25	895.25
Health and development	174.70	173.30	166.90	163.50	159.60	838.00
Social integration and protection	63.60	62.40	60.20	59.00	58.80	304.00
Monitoring and promotion of the rights of the child	28.00	28.00	28.00	28.00	28.00	140.00
Cross-sectoral costs	210.35	216.35	231.35	239.35	254.35	1 151.75
Subtotal	**665.00**	**666.00**	**666.00**	**666.00**	**666.00**	**3 329.00**
Other resources						
Education	350.00	350.00	350.00	350.00	350.00	1 750.00
Health and development	60.00	60.00	60.00	60.00	60.00	300.00
Social integration and protection	70.00	70.00	70.00	70.00	70.00	350.00
Monitoring and promotion of the rights of the child	20.00	20.00	20.00	20.00	20.00	100.00
Subtotal	**500.00**	**500.00**	**500.00**	**500.00**	**500.00**	**2 500.00**
Total	**1 165.00**	**1 166.00**	**1 166.00**	**1 166.00**	**1 166.00**	**5 829.00**

Country programme preparation process

14. The preparation process, coordinated by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, began in June 1999 with the mid-term review, followed by a joint review of the programmes of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and UNICEF. It continued in 2000 with the preparation of the situation analysis and the common country assessment (CCA) and technical meetings with the main partners, leading to the strategy meeting in September, coordinated by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs with the participation of the Ministries of Economic Development, Public Health, Education, Social Affairs, Youth and Children, and Justice. Throughout the process, the main national non-governmental organizations and the universities were consulted and involved. The programme recommendation was submitted to the member countries of the European Union and to the World Bank and was finalized in the context of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF).

Country programme goals and objectives

15. The programme will support the application to all Tunisian children of the principles of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. In particular, in accordance with government priorities, it will help to: (a) reduce maternal and neonatal morbidity and mortality while contributing to the integrated development of children under five years of age; (b) ensure the right of children to a quality education and improve the performance of the education system by working to reduce the drop-out and repeat rates and disparities between regions and between urban and rural areas; (c) prevent marginality and strengthen the system for the judicial and social protection of children; and (d) strengthen the machinery for monitoring the situation of children.

Relation to national and international priorities

16. The justification for the programme objectives and strategies will be found in the situation analysis, CCA/UNDAF and the experience gained by UNICEF from previous cooperation exercises. The programme has been devised to link up and converge with the tenth National Development Plan for 2002-2006. Account has been taken of the recommendations of the International Committee on the Rights of the Child concerning the report of Tunisia, the organizational priorities of the UNICEF medium-term plan and the draft conclusions of the special session of the United Nations General Assembly on children. Special attention has been given to identifying the added value which UNICEF cooperation and the United Nations system can bring to a middle-income country such as Tunisia.

Country programme strategy

17. This programme is based on consolidating the gains made, while promoting better inter-sectoral linkages and innovatory approaches. The cross-sectoral elements for priority action are to improve the quality of social services, reduce disparities and develop a participatory culture. This will be achieved by: (a) national

capacity-building and high-quality technical assistance; (b) the development, monitoring and evaluation of innovative initiatives; (c) exchanges of experience with other countries; and (d) strengthening existing partnerships and forging new alliances. The adolescent dimension will be incorporated into every programme. The cooperation programme has four components: education; health and development; social integration and protection; and monitoring and promoting the rights of the child. For each programme, regular resources will be used to ensure the necessary technical assistance to strengthen national capacities and formulate policy. Other resources will be used to extend further the innovatory work and the exchanges of experience.

18. **Education**. This programme represents the keystone of the new cooperation programme. Above and beyond the programme objectives, it forms part of a wider vision of how to prevent social exclusion, identifying the school as the preferred place for promoting the values of citizenship and solidarity, socialization and the participation of children and their families. The programme, in coordination and convergence with the World Bank and the European Union, comprises two projects: improving quality and promoting equity.

19. The first project focuses mainly on supporting national policies for the general application of the "basic skills" approach and the graduated system, and for gradual implementation of the preparatory year for five-year olds. UNICEF support will be geared mainly to revising school programmes and manuals; teacher training; systematizing innovatory approaches; strengthening the monitoring and evaluation system; communicating with, informing and mobilizing parents; and the effective participation of young people in school life.

20. The second project will support the development of experiments capable of guiding national policy. UNICEF will contribute to the monitoring of the priority education programme, with a view to optimizing the effectiveness of the strategy and ensuring coordination between the Ministry of Education and the other partners. It will support the effective implementation of the strategy in priority regions by improving teacher support and training school principals and teachers, developing innovatory teaching practices and setting up school councils. An experimental programme will be launched to speed up the integration of children with disabilities into the regular school system, in coordination with the Ministries of Education, Public Health and Social Affairs.

21. **Health and development**. The situation analysis has shown two things: the need to improve the quality of health services, and the importance of improving the understanding and behaviour of families with a view to promoting the integral development of children. Consequently, this programme consists of two supplementary projects.

22. The first project, aimed at improving the quality of health services, will support national strategies for auditing maternal deaths and preventing and attending cases of anaemia. UNICEF will continue to support the establishment of district health programmes through active participation in the monitoring committee, technical assistance for training, local capacity-building and the monitoring and regular evaluation of the generalization process. The quality assurance process will be carried out in the context of the district health programmes and will go hand in hand with training for teams, mastery of the methodological approach and the production of suitable tools. Research-actions will be developed in order to promote

dialogue with users and test possible ways of incorporating a service for listening to young people in health centres The PIMCI model will be improved by incorporating developmental aspects and the early detection of disabilities, and also by an anaemia component.

23. The second project, aimed at improving family practices, will develop an information campaign at the community level and in the media, aimed at promoting better care for children in the home. The project will provide the information material and will contribute to the training of communicators, with a view to disseminating knowledge and practices through the networks of the Ministry of Public Health, the National Office for the Family and Population, the national literacy programme for young people and children, and non-governmental organizations. The materials produced will also be broadcast by the various radio and television stations, and the impact in terms of improving knowledge, practices and behaviour will be evaluated during and after the programme cycle.

24. **Social integration and protection**. This programme is directed at children and adolescents who are at risk of being marginalized. It consists of two projects: child protection and promotion of social integration. The first project aims to strengthen the protection system. Training and support for child protection representatives will be extended to other actors, especially family and juvenile court judges, social workers and the police. UNICEF will support the training of trainers and the in-service training of staff in techniques relating to listening, mediation and care in "open-door" institutions. The project will encourage the harmonization of the different types of activities and collaboration in the context of cross-sectoral protection networks. Regional experience at the beginning of the cycle will serve as a basis for a model of working through networks which can be gradually extended to other governorates. Exchanges of experience will also be organized with other countries, in order to enrich the knowledge of participants and bring them into contact with other practices.

25. The second project aims to prevent social exclusion. Believing that the welfare of the child is paramount, UNICEF will continue its advocacy for more humane practices and for seeking alternatives to the institutionalization of children and adolescents with special needs. The project will continue to aim at reducing the length of institutional stays and finding alternative solutions for children deprived of a family setting. Research-actions will be carried out with the ministries concerned and with voluntary bodies, in order to identify appropriate methodologies for the integration and re-integration of young people a· 1 adolescents who have dropped out of school or are in conflict with the law.

26. **Monitoring and promotion of the rights of the child**. This programme will provide technical support, through the situation monitoring project, for the research institute and the preparation of the annual report on children. The project will support the harmonization of indicators, the existing data collection system, studies and surveys on emerging topics, and the incorporation of modules on children into the 2004 census. The second project, which aims to establish a culture of the rights of the child in society, will develop alliances with non-governmental organizations, universities, the media and the private sector, to provide them with information and involve them in specific actions in favour of positive changes in behaviour.

27. The **cross-sectoral component** will allow an integrated programme monitoring and evaluation plan to be developed in order to ensure that activities in

the field are monitored and to improve teamwork and the multidisciplinary approach within the office and with partners. A strategy for mobilizing resources and strengthening alliances with donors will be prepared subsequently.

Monitoring and evaluation

28. The integrated monitoring and evaluation plan will be the key instrument for evaluating the relevance of the programme and reorienting intervention where appropriate. The indicators for the programme objectives include the school enrolment, drop-out and repeat rates, and the quality of learning achievements; morbidity rates and the number of maternal and neonatal deaths; the quality of families' knowledge and practices with regard to child development; and the adoption of inclusive policies and alternative solutions to institutionalization and to special schooling for children with special needs. The objectives of the cooperation programme will include the definition of indicators on emerging topics such as young people and adolescents, minors in conflict with the law and children deprived of a family setting.

29. It will be necessary to gather a bank of disaggregated data, because of the aspects of equity, geography and environment which the programme aims to cover. The tools used will include surveys of the monitoring of the quality of learning achievements (*Monitoring Learning Achievements*), the database on basic skills, and external evaluations made jointly with the Government. The routine statistics compiled by the Ministries of Education, Public Health and Social Affairs, and the occasional surveys by the National Institute of Statistics, will back up the monitoring and evaluation of the programme. MICS-2 and the 1999 population and employment survey have also provided the country with basic data on which to rely. The annual reviews and the mid-term review planned for 2004 will remain the opportunities of choice for evaluating all the programmes.

Collaboration with the other partners

30. The joint mid-term review and the preparation of the CCA/UNDAF have enabled the United Nations agencies to identify areas for supplemental intervention, such as reducing social disparities, improving the quality and efficiency of services and integrating young people in society. Partnerships for preventing social exclusion will be developed with UNDP, the United Nations Office for Project Services, the World Health Organization (WHO) and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization; partnerships for promoting health among young people will be developed with UNFPA, WHO and the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS; and partnership for strengthening the system of data collection and analysis will be developed with UNDP. The convergence of educational interventions with the World Bank and the European Union will be maintained through regular monitoring meetings, coordinated by the Ministry, through the exchange of information and by carrying out joint evaluations. In the field of protection, collaboration with Belgian cooperation programmes will be extended to include French and Italian cooperation. Cooperation with non-governmental organizations working actively for the rights of children will be maintained and expanded, and UNICEF will play a role as an ethical and technical reference point, and as a facilitator of complementarity with the public services. Awareness-raising

and the provision of information to donors and the private sector about UNICEF activities, prior to the strengthening of alliances, will be pursued in order to ensure the mobilization of supplementary resources.

Programme management

31. The cooperation programme will be officially coordinated by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The partnership relationship between the principals and UNICEF will be maintained and consolidated by advocacy, technical assistance and dialogue. This relationship of trust will be extended to the departments newly involved in the programme. To operationalize the cross-sectoral approach to the programme, interministerial steering and monitoring committees will be set up at the national and regional levels. At the local level, networking will be promoted in order to encourage coordination. The added value of UNICEF cooperation in Tunisia lies in its capacity to provide quality technical assistance and to promote innovation. The office structure has been adapted in order to reflect this and to be able to provide the required technical support, either directly or by identifying expertise at the national or international levels. The assignment of internal programme responsibilities has also been guided by the concern to strengthen cross-sectoral action and team work, in line with the cooperation programme strategies.

TABLE

COUNTRY : TUNISIA
PROGRAMME : 2002-2006

LINKAGE OF PROGRAMME BUDGET AND STAFFING/STAFF COSTS

PROGRAMME SECTION/AREAS AND FUNDING SOURCE	PROGRAMME BUDGET			POSTS a/									STAFF COSTS b/		
	RR	OR	TOTAL	D2/L7	D1/L6	P/L5	P/L4	P/L3	P/L2	IP	NP	GS	TOTAL	IP	LOCAL	TOTAL
REGULAR RESOURCES																
EDUCATION	895,250		895,250	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	2	0	321,234	321,234
HEALTH AND DEVELOPMENT	838,000		838,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	259,979	259,979
PROTECTION AND SOCIAL INCLUSION	304,000		304,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
MONITORING & ADVOCACY OF CHILD	140,000		140,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
CROSS SECTORAL COSTS	1,151,750		1,151,750	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	5	6	656,570	357,838	1,014,408
TOTAL RR	3,329,000		3,329,000	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	2	6	9	656,570	939,051	1,595,621
OTHER RESOURCES :																
EDUCATION		1,750,000	1,750,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
HEALTH AND DEVELOPMENT		300,000	300,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
PROTECTION AND SOCIAL INCLUSION		350,000	350,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
MONITORING & ADVOCACY OF CHILD		100,000	100,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL OR		2,500,000	2,500,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL RR & OR	3,329,000	2,500,000	5,829,000	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	2	6	9	656,570	939,051	1,595,621
SUPPORT BUDGET	Operating costs		864,259													
	Staffing			0	0	1	0	0	0	1	3	4	8	700,199	1,089,006	1,789,205
GRAND TOTAL (RR + OR + SB)				0	0	1	1	0	0	2	5	10	17	1,356,769	2,028,057	3,384,826
	Number of posts and staff costs:															
	Current programme cycle									2	4	11	17			
	At the end of proposed programme cycle (indicative only)									2	5	10	17	1,356,769	2,028,057	3,384,826

RR = regular resources.
OR = other resources.
IP = international Professional.
NP = national Professional
GS = General Service.
SB = support budget.

a/ Each post, regardless of its funding source, supports the country programme as a whole
b/ Excludes temporary assistance and overtime.

E/ICEF/2001/P/L.48/Add.1